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FM USMISSION USUN NEW YORK  
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INFO RUEHBR/AMEMBASSY BRASILIA PRIORITY 1157

C O N F I D E N T I A L USUN NEW YORK 000813

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E.O. 12958: DECL: 08/26/2019  
TAGS: PARM PHUM PREL BM  
SUBJECT: AMBASSADOR RICE MEETS WITH BRAZILIAN PR VIOTTI

Classified By: Ambassador Rice for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

¶1. (C) Summary: During an August 26 meeting with Ambassador Rice, Brazilian PermRep Viotti listed peacekeeping and peacebuilding as priorities for Brazil, in particular the UN Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH) and peacebuilding activities in Guinea-Bissau. Viotti noted the importance of addressing increased GRULAC participation in the Peacebuilding Commission during its upcoming mandate renewal.

Ambassador Rice provided an overview of renewed U.S. engagement at the UN, including in the Human Rights Council, commenting that the U.S. is engaging at the UN in a new fashion, with the inextricable link between security and development as a starting point. Viotti remarked that this new approach would gain support with the G-77. On Iran, Viotti said Brazil recognizes a country's right to develop peaceful uses for nuclear technology but would press Iran to be more transparent and respond constructively to the P5 1 offer. With intergovernmental negotiations on Security Council reform approaching, Viotti proposed to narrow the discussion only to expansion of both permanent and non-permanent members. Both ambassadors agreed to increase cooperation and continue consultations at the UN. End Summary.

¶2. (C) Brazilian PermRep Viotti said that Brazil has taken an active interest in "virtually all General Assembly issues." She commented that it was "good the General Assembly could express itself" on the financial crisis and voiced appreciation for what she considered the constructive U.S. approach during discussions. Among its top priorities at the UN, PR Viotti listed development and peacekeeping, specifically Haiti and Guinea-Bissau. Viotti remarked that Brazil was concerned with sustaining the gains achieved in Haiti and said that the focus should be both on security and development, including employment generation, to ensure continued stability. Viotti compared Guinea-Bissau to Haiti, commenting that both need to "have a horizon" to look toward with development projects and employment generation. Viotti plans to travel to Guinea-Bissau for the inauguration ceremony of the newly-elected government.

¶3. (C) On peacebuilding, Viotti said the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC) was conceived as a coordinating body to "join UN organizations as a whole." Coordination with the Security Council is good, she remarked, but the PBC has not achieved overall coordination with other UN bodies, particularly the General Assembly. Viotti said the Group of Latin American and Caribbean Countries (GRULAC) remained unsatisfied with the composition of the PBC. Mexico, Uruguay, Chile and Brazil participate already, she noted, but GRULAC participation should be expanded when the PBC mandate is reviewed. Viotti stressed that incorporating countries not currently participating in the PBC is crucial to expanding the peacebuilding dialogue. Ambassador Rice said that the U.S. is interested in energizing the PBC, the weakest link of the prevention and conflict stabilization apparatus.

¶4. (C) Ambassador Rice said the U.S. is engaging at the UN in

a new fashion, with the inextricable link between security and development as a starting point. Rice commented that these two issues are often segregated at the UN, noting that the division is becoming increasingly archaic and counterproductive. Rice said that the U.S. is reviewing its approach to the UNGA First and Second Committees and hopes to control cost and ensure effectiveness in the Fifth Committee, ensuring that dollars spent achieve our goals. Regarding the Human Rights Council (HRC), Rice said that the U.S. will focus on the most egregious violations of human rights and seek to move it away from Israel bashing. Viotti responded that the Obama administration's approach was "music to her ears" and would gain support in the G-77. She agreed on the need to condemn human rights violations in the HRC but added that Brazil prefers engagement over isolation and will thus continue to engage in dialogue with those perceived as "violators."

¶ 15. (C) Ambassador Rice said that the U.S. is working to strike a balance between condemning a situation on the ground and looking for windows to use both diplomacy and pressure in countries like Burma, Zimbabwe and Sudan. On Iran, Rice said that we have extended our hand but it is unclear whether the Iranians would accept our offer to engage. We are open to trying dialogue but will not exclude other means should dialogue not yield timely results. Viotti responded that Brazil recognizes Iran's right to develop nuclear technology for peaceful purposes, but also understands the need for the country to abide by its international legal obligations. Viotti said that Brazil will press the Iranians to rectify its lack of transparency with regard to their nuclear program, to enable Iran to "enjoy a normal relationship with the international community."

¶ 16. (C) On Security Council reform, Viotti said the main differences lie in the modalities for reform. She praised Afghan PermRep Tanin's ability to guide the reform process and intergovernmental negotiations. Viotti said a clear majority wants meaningful change, which is an increase in the number of permanent and non-permanent members, taking into account new actors, new powers and new threats. She suggested that the discussion move forward with fewer options and proposed leaving the UFC position behind, adding that there were probably a dozen "hard core" members of the UFC, and they would not get sufficient numbers to block reform. (Note: The UFC advocates an increase of non-permanent members only.) Viotti said that Brazil's view is that the Council should avoid renewable, longer-term permanent seats because such a decision would exacerbate regional tensions and encourage members to focus on re-election, rather than Council issues. Viotti assessed that the Africa Group would not likely change its perspective until it is sure a successful reform plan is on the table. Rice reviewed the U.S. perspective on reform.

¶ 17. (C) Ambassador Rice provided an overview of U.S. goals for the upcoming Security Council summit on nuclear nonproliferation and nuclear disarmament, including a possible Council product. Viotti noted that Brazil "takes great interest" in disarmament and nonproliferation. Rice welcomed Brazil's comments to the concept paper circulated to Council members and proposed continued coordination between the U.S. and Brazil at the UN.

RICE